



# SUNDAY SCHOOL

**Participant 11/4/2018**

H

## HIGHLIGHT: Romans 6:4-11

<sup>4</sup>Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in a new way of life. <sup>5</sup>For if we have been joined with Him in the likeness of His death, we will certainly also be in the likeness of His resurrection. <sup>6</sup>For we know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that sin's dominion over the body may be abolished, so that we may no longer be enslaved to sin, <sup>7</sup>since a person who has died is freed from sin's claims. <sup>8</sup>Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him, <sup>9</sup>because we know that Christ, having been raised from the dead, will not die again. Death no longer rules over Him. <sup>10</sup>For in light of the fact that He died, He died to sin once for all; but in light of the fact that He lives, He lives to God. <sup>11</sup>So, you too consider yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

E

## EXPLAIN

The art of rhetoric—or persuasion—is an ancient one which was, in many ways, formally begun by Aristotle in the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Many Christian and Secular scholars, alike, consider Paul's letter to the Romans to be one of the great masterworks of rhetorical writing. In Romans, Paul expertly crafts argument after argument to prove that Jesus is the only means to salvation. In today's passage, Paul talks to believers, exhorting them to consider themselves dead to sin so that they can experience the freedom Christ offers.

v.4      One of the most scandalous aspects of Christianity is referenced in this section, namely that life in Christ comes only after death to self. Paul uses baptism as an illustration. We are buried as Christ was: momentarily. Baptism expresses the end of the old life which was governed by the sin we were born into under Adam, and the new life into which we walk as slaves to righteousness rather than to sin. The only way to break the bondage into which we were born is to die; the only way to live unto Christ is to be born anew.



- vv. 5-7 Being “joined with Christ” in His death refers to a union that is close-knit. The phrase Paul uses “exactly expresses the process by which a graft becomes unified with the life of a tree... The union is of the closest sort, and life from Christ flows through to him” (Morris). It fits with the imagery Jesus used about “abiding” in Him. For us to have been born again, we must have died—as certainly as Jesus did.

Though one day we will be raised physically from a physical death, this refers to a spiritual resurrection with physical results. Since we have spiritually put our old selves to death, we are also released from the bondage that our old selves were under. We’re born again “in the likeness of His resurrection,” meaning that we no longer resemble our old selves, but the One who raised us. Sin’s dominion over us is broken because Jesus shattered it.

- v.6 “...in order that sin’s dominion over the body may be abolished.” The “old self” was crucified with Christ—an action that God did in us, not that we did under our own power. Richard Lenski wrote of this event, “In us there was nothing even to sicken and to weaken our old man, much less to murder him by crucifixion; God had to do this.” Because it was not up to us to put this “old self” to death, there is nothing we can do to bring him to life again.

So if this old, sin-ruled self is dead, why do we still sin? It is important to distinguish the *old self* from the *flesh*. David Guzik attempts to distinguish these two things this way: “The flesh is a problem in the battle against sin because it has been expertly trained in sinful habits by three sources. First, the old man, before he was crucified with Christ, trained and ‘imprinted’ himself on the flesh. Second, the world system, in its spirit of rebellion against God, can have a continuing influence on the flesh. Finally, the devil seeks to tempt and influence the flesh towards sin.”

Perhaps Spurgeon put the distinction most eloquently: “Evil enters us now as an interloper and a stranger, and works sad havoc, but it does not abide in us upon the throne; it is an alien, and despised, and no more honored and delighted in. We are dead to the reigning power of sin.” If, when a believer sins, he is repulsed by it and seeks to confess it, it cannot be said that he is ruled by it any longer.

- v.11 The HCSB translates the Greek word *logizomai* as “consider.” This is not an incorrect rendering, but it may lose some of its impact. To “consider” is to reckon: adding up everything on one side of a ledger in order to see what it equals. When someone “considers” themselves to be dead to sin but alive to God, it means that they are constantly taking stock of the things that they have “put off” to see if it matches with what they have “put on.” Verse 11 contains the first imperative in the book of Romans, which was entirely intentional. Believers must always consider what they are doing to ensure their actions line up with a life that has been made new by the power of Jesus.



## A

### APPLY

1. What stuck out to you or challenged you in what you heard in the sermon or read in the text?
2. How does baptism paint a picture of someone who has been born again? Why is (or isn't) baptism important?
3. Romans describes believers as having been crucified with Christ and joined in the "likeness of His resurrection." **If you have experienced this—when you once were dead, but are now alive—describe that moment for us. How does having a new life affect how you live, think, and interact with people? How you interact with God?**
4. If we are no longer enslaved to sin, why do we still sin? What is the difference between sinning and being a slave to it?
5. How do you put the desires of your flesh to death? What are things you need to do to entirely submit your new life to Christ?

## R

### RESPOND

- Take a moment to self-reflect. How do you think people see you? What are aspects of your life that speak of a life that has been made new? What are actions of the flesh that you need to put to death?

